1:Indiana U S-4, 5(no date)1955 EOI Finland EOI

Annex "A," Subparagraph 1p,

Sociological Background

HEALTH AND SANITATION

262 The diet of the Finns is based on milk and butter, cereals, meat and potatoes. The consumption of vegetables is still quite low, and fruits, except for fruit preserves, are accessible to everyone only during summer and early autumn. Fish in general is important in the coastal areas, and salted Baltic herrings are 261 common all over the country. Next to the Irish, 146 the Finns are the heaviest eaters in the world. The average consumption of calories per day per person is 3330 (in Ireland 3480), while in Sweden it is 3090 and in the United States 3160. All the same, hard work and a harsh climate seem to counteract the effect of the excessive calories; the Finns do not show any more tendency to obesity -285- than their neighbors.

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262 In 1950 the monthly consumption of food in an average family (4-5 members) was estimated as follows:

Butter and margarine	7. 2 kg.
Cheese	0. 5 kg.
Eggs	62
Meat	8. 6 kg.
Fish	9. 0 kg.
Rye bread	5. 3 kg.
Whole wheat or barley bread	5. 3 kg.
Wheat	12. 5 kg.
Potatoes	40. 8 kg.
Milk	82 litres
Fruit	2. 7 kg.
Sugar	7. 7 kg.
Coffee	1. 0 kg.
Fruit preserves	1. 6 kg.

•262 Sausages and cold cuts 3. 2 kg.

Beer 8. 6 litres

At the time of this estimate, sugar and coffee [272] were still rationed. With a free market, the coffee consumption has probably increased in most families.

After the recent war the general tendency has been to substitute wheat bread for the traditional dark rye bread, a development which both physi- 262 cians and dentists are warning against. At meals 252 rye bread is still the favorite. It is always sour, baked in water or buttermilk, and seasoned for variety with caraway seeds, malt or syrup. In western Finland the bread is traditionally baked in round, flat loaves with a hole in the middle. After baking, the loaves are all threaded on a round stick, which is raised high up next to the ceiling between the beams. The bread

262 becomes hard and crisp, and a month's supply
252 can be baked at one time. In eastern Finland the farmers prefer their bread soft, and the hard loaves are nowadays too tough to consume. Instead, the so-called hardtack, commercially prepared, is very popular all over the country. Wheat is used for coffee bread, cakes and cookies, which the Finns consume in great quantities in the true Scandinavian manner. Different kinds of cereals, cooked in milk or water, either as a thick porridge or thin gruel, are basic in the Finnish menu.

262 The consumption of meat is still fairly low, although it has been steadily increasing. A few decades ago the farmers did all their slaughtering in the fall and lived the whole winter on smoked or salted meat; lately, the establishment of co-operative slaughter houses has enabled

262 the rural families to enjoy fresh meat throughout the year. The consumption of milk and butter, on the other hand, rates among the highest in Europe, and the same is true of potatoes. Conversely, sugar consumption in Finland is among the lowest in Western Europe.

262 146 In spite of its monotony, the Finnish diet is estimated to be quite adequate because of the high consumption of milk and whole cereals. It contains about 112 grams of protein and 84 grams of fat per day per person, and sufficient amount of vitamins A, B and C. Dietary deficiency diseases are unknown in Finland, except for rickets in small children, and lately even this has virtually disappeared in most districts.

264 In the farmhouses three meals are eaten per day, at 7:00 A. M., at noon, and at 6:00 P. M. In addition, there are intervals of coffee

264 drinking at 10:00 A. M. and 3:00 P. M., and the coffee pot is kept warm on the hearth all day long. Among city people these times differ slightly. The first meal of the day, at 7:00 or 8:00, is very light, and breakfast--or lunch--is eaten at 11:00 o'clock, while dinner, the principle meal of the day, follows at 4:00 or 5:00 P. M. The high point of the day is the afternoon coffee, around 1:00 or 2:00 P. M. Coffee parties are frequent, and the hostess prides herself on the multitude of cakes, cookies and tarts she has baked, especially on a "name day" celebra-
527 tion. (Finland and Sweden have a calendar in which each day is dedicated to a different personal name, and these occasions are observed much more carefully than birthdays.)

262 In the country important occasions, such as
527 weddings, anniversaries and even funerals, are

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followed by a big dinner which begins with the smörgasbord, with its multitude of smoked and jellied fish, cold cuts and casseroles--actually a meal in itself. The other courses consist of beef bouillon with small meat pies, cooked or fried fish, pot roast and a dessert, nowadays usually ice cream instead of the traditional rice pudding with fruit sauce. The holiday dishes are partly the same as in Sweden: at Christmas, lye-fish (lutfisk in Swedish), roast ham, rice pudding and tarts filled with stewed prunes; on Shrove Tuesday pea soup, pigs' feet and buns filled with marzipan. There is a very special Finnish Easter dish, a kind of baked pudding made of rye flour, malts and seasoning, and eaten with cream and sugar. The first of May calls for the traditional drink of mead, and Midsummer is the day for frying the crisp, paper-thin pancakes,

262 527 which are the favorite dessert all over Scandinavia.

439 262 241 As indicated in Subparagraph 1m, Finland is partly dependent on her imports for meeting the demand for cereals. In dairy products she is self-sufficient (before World War II she was even an exporter of these products), but, without fodder from abroad, the productivity of the dairy industry is bound to decline sharply. The cultivation of the sugar beet has greatly increased, but is still unable to meet native consumption. Other articles that must be imported 262 245 are fruits, coffee and tobacco. The forests of Finland abound in wild berries, which bring a welcome variety to the diet, and currants, strawberries and raspberries are common in most gardens. But the only fruit tree that, at least occasionally, gives good crops in southern

•262 and central Finland, is the apple tree. Cultiva-
245 tion of pear, plum and cherry trees is limited to the southeastern corner of the country, and even at best it is not very profitable.

[515] Basically the Finns are a physically strong
164 race, and cleanliness is traditional. But the harsh climate, especially the absence of the sun during the long winter, has contributed to the prevalence of some diseases, especially tuberculosis. Epidemic diseases are not common. There has not been a single case of smallpox for two decades, typhus epidemics are rare, and since vaccination became available, diphtheria has greatly decreased. Polio, on the other hand, has been increasing. Leprosy has completely dissappeared, so that the hospital for that disease has been closed. During the time of Finland's independence much progress